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FRIDAY
AUGUST 21, 1953

Our atomic energy authorities announced yesterday that the Russians had exploded on August 12 a hydrogen bomb, or at least something of that nature. This was ascertained by scientific detection apparatus and confirms Malenkov's recent assertion that his experts had penetrated this mystery.

The Sultan of Morocco was deposed yesterday and exiled by the French authorities to Corsica.

These two pieces of news are serious enough to give all foreign offices furiously to think.

E., Audrey and I went today to see the Chateau of Dampierre; unfortunately we did not arrive during the hours set for visitors and only viewed its interesting exterior.

Afterwards we drove through the luscious valley of the Chevreuse and looked at Vaux le Cerney. This great religious establishment of the Middle Ages still offers magnificent ruins. Much restoration was done to it by Baron Henri de Rothschild, who outfitted forty-five master's bedrooms and twenty-odd bathrooms. He had an excellent [redacted] to shoot there and kept sixty gardeners busy in horticultural [redacted] labors. During the last war the property was confiscated under the provisions of anti-Jewish laws and sold at auction. The dwellings were badly damaged by German occupancy and later by Allied troops. The whole vast enterprise is too large for private use and it would be well and fitting if it could revert to some ecclesiastical institution.

We passed over today some of the ground I covered in August 1944 when I was with Leclerq's division during its march ~~from Rambouillet to Paris. It~~ is peaceful now compared with then, when there were Germans still scattered and active in the forests and a few 88 guns ~~properly disposed to strike terror~~ in those who climbed the winding roads.

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We went to the city of Versailles and learned from the [redacted] knowledgeable old antique dealer, Monsieur Poulet, that Louis XV's Parc Aux Cerfs had existed intact until the end of the first World War. Poulet had bought all the furnishings from the inheritors of the Austrian baroness who owned it. He said that although they were of fine quality they were simple since Louis XV always went there incognito and most of the girls who were brought there for his delectation thought he was one of the courtiers. We drove around to see this inconspicuous dwelling at No. 6, Rue St. Médéric but as it is inhabited we could not enter. We were turned away from the Musée Fontenoy, which is due to be opened soon by the Beaux Arts. We visited the Musée of the Jeu de Paume, where the Assembly delegates signed their famous oath not to dissolve until Louis XVI granted a Constitution. Walked home through the palace grounds.

This evening early to bed after a little work on the clay pigeons.

It has been refreshingly cool each night this week, necessitating at least two summer blankets. The proximity of so much stagnant water would make the mosquitoes unbearable if it were not for the screens and DDT.

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